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ABSTRACT

This annotated bibliography contains 42 titles of teenager-selected favorite books, all of them published or reprinted between 1986 and 2000. Along with the bibliography is a 13-step rubric for evaluating adolescent literature. (NKA)

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Teens' Favorite Books: An Annotated Bibliography and a Rubric for Literary Evaluation of Adolescent Literature

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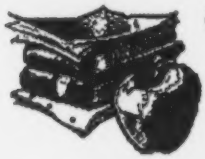

Compiled by Regina G. Chatel October 2, 2001
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Anderson, Laurie Halse.(1999). Speak. Farrar Straus & Giroux (Juv); ISBN: 0374371520
A devastating event has a traumatic effect on Melinda's freshman year of high school, causing her to be branded an outcast. She copes with the trauma by becoming silent.

Avi. The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle. (1992). Avon; ISBN: 0380714752

"Not every thirteen-year-old girl is accused of murder, brought to trial, and found guilty," opens this thrilling tale of a proper young lady who changes when she gets caught up in a mutiny. A top-notch adventure. A Newbery Honor book.

Bauer, Marion. (1986). On My Honor. Yearling Books; ISBN: 0440466334
On the way to the park, Joel's best friend challenges him to take a swim in the "treacherous" Vermillion River. Both boys have been warned not to go near the river, but despite what they've been told Joel gives in. It isn't until Tony disappears that Joel realizes that Tony can't swim. Joel dives in search of his friend, but with no luck, Tony is gone.

Bloor, Edward. (1998). Tangerine Apple; ISBN: 059043277X
Zing! Pow! Zowee! As the title suggests, this new novel is a delicious burst, full of flavor and entirely refreshing. Paul Fisher is legally blind, but -- the truth is -- he can see better than everyone around him. He's even starting to see through the lies that his family tells him about how he hurt his eyes. Things start to come into focus more when Paul's family moves to Tangerine -- a crazy, wacky town in Florida where giant sinkholes eat up entire schools, where underground fires burn for years. In a weird town like Tangerine, even a bug-eyed geek like Paul might become popular. In Tangerine, Paul Fisher begins to believe the things he sees, and he begins to see himself anew. Sparkling!

Boyd, C.D. Chevrolet Saturdays. (1995). New York: Penguin Books. ISBN 0140368590
Chevrolet Saturdays is about the experiences and frustrations of a fifth-grade African-American boy, Joey. We witness Joey's "right of passage" as he confronts many inner struggles, which he must eventually resolve. His parents are recently divorced, his father is moving two thousand miles away, and his mother has remarried.

Burgess, Melvin. (1999). Smack. Avon; ISBN: 0380732238
Four teens turn to heroin to escape confining life situations, but find themselves hopelessly trapped by their addiction.

Carlson, Lori M., ed. (1994). Cool Salsa: Bilingual Poems on Growing Up Latino in the United States. Introduction by Oscar Hijuelos. New York: Henry Holt and Company. ISBN: o-805-03135-9. Bilingual. Thirty-seven poems in English and Spanish by contemporary Latino/a writers.

Cisneros, Sandra. (1989). The House on Mango Street. New York: Vintage Books. ISBN: 0-679-73477-5. 110 p. Grade 9-12. A series of vignettes captures the thoughts and emotions in poems and stories, of Esperanza Cordero, a young girl growing up in the Hispanic quarter of Chicago.

Covington, Dennis. (1993). Lizard. Laurel Leaf; ISBN: 0440214904
Ever feel like a freak? Well, then you'll probably be able to relate to Lucius Sims. He sort of looks like a reptile, and everyone calls him "Lizard" and treats him like an alien because he's different. In fact, they put him in a home for retarded boys even though no one's ever proven he has a handicap. Lucius has it down, though, and you better hang on tight when he heads out on a madcap adventure in search of freedom. Covington, a tremendous writer, won the 1991 Delacorte Prize for this book -- a prize given to outstanding first ventures in Young Adult fiction.

Doherty, Belie. (1994). Dear Nobody. Morrow, William & Company, New York, 1994
Dear Nobody is a great book for children between grades 7 and 10. The story is told as a flashback, in some of the loveliest, most lyrical prose. Helen and Chris narrate the consequences of one night's unprotected passion that changes the course of their lives forever. With teen parenthood superimposing itself upon college plans, both give voice to disbelief, confusion and fear.

Ferris, Jean. (1998). Bad. Farrar Straus & Giroux (Juv); ISBN: 0374304793
Sixteen-year-old Dallas loves being bad so much that she can't stop. She and her friends call it "skating" -- a little petty left, wild joyrides in the night. Unfortunately, when she and her friends decide to rob a convenience store at gunpoint, they make sure Dallas is the one holding the gun so that they can split if things get hairy. They do get hairy, and Dallas can't believe she's standing there with a gun in her hand. When did she become bad? Dallas has plenty of time to ponder that question because the judge sentences her to six months in a girls rehabilitation center. There, she discovers other people who love the thrill and exhilaration of being "bad." In fact, not all of the girls there even want to be rehabilitated. Does Dallas?

Fox, Paula.(1993). Monkey Island. Yearling Books; ISBN: 0440407702
Monkey Island was an excellent book; it grabbed the reader's attention with the first sentence, "Clay Garrity's mother Angela had been gone five days from the room in the hotel where they had been living since the middle of October".

Hamilton, Virginia. (1986). The Planet of Junior Brown. Aladdin Paperbacks; ISBN: 0020435401
Although this one was published in 1971, its classic theme still packs a wallop. It's about a 300-pound musical prodigy with his head in the clouds and the homeless kid he befriends. It's about the worlds they create together in a secret cellar beneath the school, and it's about what happens when reality crashes in.

Hesser, Terry Spencer. (1999). Kissing Doorknobs. Laureleaf; ISBN: 0440413141
Fourteen-year-old Tara describes how her increasing obsessive compulsions begin to take over her life and affect her relationships with her family and friends.

Hinton, S.E. (1989 reissue). Rumble Fish. Laurel Leaf; ISBN: 0440975344
Rusty-James is the toughest guy in the group of high-school kids who hang out and shoot pool down at Benny's, and he enjoys keeping up his reputation. What he wants most of all is to be just like his older brother, the Motorcycle Boy. He wants to stay calm and laughing when things get dangerous, to be the toughest street fighter and the most respected guy on their side of the river. Rusty-James isn't book-smart, and he knows it. He relies on his fists instead of his brains.

(1988). Taming the Star Runner. Laurel Leaf; ISBN: 0440204798
Travis is the epitome of cool, even when he's in trouble. But when he's sent to stay with his uncle on a ranch in the country, he finds that his schoolmates don't like his tough city ways. He does find friendship of a sort with Casey, who runs a riding school at the ranch. She's the bravest person Travis has ever met, and crazy enough to try to tame the Star Runner, her beautiful, dangerous horse who's always on edge, about to explode. It's clear to Travis that he and the Star Runner are two of a kind: creatures not meant to be tamed.

(1989 reissue). Tex. Laurel Leaf; ISBN: 0440978505
Easygoing, thoughtless, and direct, Tex at fifteen likes everyone and everything, especially his horse, Negrito, and Johnny Collins' blue-eyed sister, Jamie. He thinks life with his seventeen-year-old brother, Mason, in their ramshackle house would be just about perfect if only Mace would stop complaining about Pop. Pop hasn't been home in five months. Mace wants to get out of Oklahoma. Tex just seems to attract trouble and danger...suddenly everything's falling apart. Can Tex keep it all together?

Hoffman, Mary. (1997). Boundless Grace Dial Books for Young Readers; ISBN: 0803717156
This story is appropriate for young children. It shows the ever-changing lifestyles of today. A little girl named Grace, who lives with her mother and grandmother in the United States longs to have a father so she makes up many different scenarios about her father. She finally gets to visit her father, who lives in Africa. When she and her grandmother arrive in Africa it is only to find that her father has another family. Grace goes through all the typical adjustments of this lifestyle. Remembering the wicked stepmother in Cinderella, she will not have anything to do with her new family. The story has a happy ending where Grace with her father's help learns to love her new family. A great book about divorce and nontraditional families.

Johnson, Angela. (2000). Heaven. Aladdin Paperbacks; ISBN: 0689822901
Marley's on the verge of learning a new truth about herself and her family, but what if that truth turns Momma and Pops into liars? And who will Marley be if everything she's ever believed in turns out to be untrue? It won the 1998 Coretta Scott King award.

Jukes, Mavis. (1987 reprint). Like Jake and Me. Knopf; ISBN: 0394892631
In the book Like Jake and Me, Alex has a new step dad with whom he is trying to develop a relationship with. However, to the little Alex, Jake seems entirely out of reach. Alex keeps

asking to help Jake with his work, but Jake refuses, thinking Alex to young. That is until Alex discovers a wolf spider crawling around on Jake's back.

Kerr, M.E. (1989 reissue). Dinky Hocker Shoots Smack! HarperTrophy; ISBN: 0064470067
In order to get attention, a fat girl announces in Day-Glo graffiti that she shoots smack, but her do-good mother is too busy rehabilitating addicts to notice. M. E. Kerr has been turning out great novels for decades. This one, though over 25 years old, is still sharp enough to scratch underneath your skin and remind you of how much you hated yourself. There are no simple twists here, and Kerr avoids moralizing about drugs or weight or anything.

Lowry, Lois. (1994). *The Giver.* Laurel Leaf; ISBN: 0440219078
What is gained in a society with no pain, no evil, no war, no death? What is lost? Jonas is faced with this question and other deeper ones when he is appointed to be the new "Receiver" of memories.

Lynch, Chris. (1998 reprint). Gypsy Davey. Harpercollins Juvenile Books; ISBN: 0064407306
How come, if Davey is as slow-witted as his mixed-up family thinks he is, he's the only one in touch with his heart? He also is the only one who understands the power of family bonds, caring, and love. Davey's mother is beautiful but confused. His father is lost, rootless, absent. Davey's care falls on his sister's young shoulders, but she has problems and unfulfilled needs, too. In this atmosphere of extreme neglect, we watch Davey grow up and adapt to the world.

Lynch, Chris. (1996). Slot Machine. HarperTrophy; ISBN: 0064471403
Poor Elvin... it's tough being a fat guy at summer camp, especially when *this* camp is a sports boot camp in disguise. At St. Paul's Seminary Retreat Center, every boy has a slot for the summer: basketball, golf, wrestling, baseball, football. Elvin, unfortunately, doesn't fit into any slot. He knows this in advance and tells the camp directors that he is "unslottable." Even more unfortunately, the camp directors scoff at him. "Of course, there's a slot for you! We just have to find it," they say. And that's where the fun begins. Elvin is a cranky, wisecracking square peg with a heart of gold in a sea of round holes. Who says novels about not fitting in need to be sad and full of angst? Elvin is a riot! I dare you to read Slot Machine without laughing out loud at least once!

Mazer, N.F. (1987). After the Rain Avon Books, New York. Flare; ISBN: 0380750252
This is a great book for children in grade 6 or 7. Up step by grudging step, Rachel and her ornery grandfather come together in the last months of his life. In the background are Rachel's fears of social isolation; her irritation with her stolid sweet parents; and her tentative romance with Lewis Olswanger. When Rachel's best friend brings her birthday party to the old man's apartment, they participate in a joyous celebratory dance, and the contrast of youth to age, life to death is reassuring.

Myers, W. D. (1999). Monster. HarperCollins. ISBN 0060280778
This is an amazing novel: gritty, real, surprising, challenging. It's the story of Steve Harmon, a sixteen-year-old amateur filmmaker who stumbles into a terrible situation that may change his life forever. He's on trial for felony murder because the owner of a Harlem drugstore was shot and killed during a robbery at the store. Did Steve serve as lookout during that robbery? Or are

his "friends" trying to frame him? Frankly, reality begins to blur for Steve as the trial starts and his future hangs on the line. To cope, he blocks out the swirl of dialogue and courtroom proceedings as if he were making a film of his life. How will it end? He's on the edge of his seat, along with us, waiting to find out. Myers describes prison scenes with care, but he doesn't hide the grim realities Steve

Myers, W.D. (1983) Hoops. Laurel Leaf; ISBN: 0440938848
All eyes are on seventeen-year-old Lonnie Jackson while he practices with his team for a citywide basketball Tournament of Champions. His coach, Cal, knows Lonnie has what it takes to be a pro-basketball player, but warns him about giving in to the pressure. Cal knows because he, too, once had the chance--but sold out. As the Tournament nears, Lonnie learns that some heavy bettors want Cal to keep him on the bench so that the team will lose the championship. As the last seconds of the game tick away Lonnie and Cal must make a decision. Are they willing to blow the chance of a lifetime?

Naylor, Phyllis. (1987) The Agony of Alice. Aladdin Paperbacks; ISBN: 0689816723
This story is about a few years, age 10-16, in the life of a girl named Alice. Alice is growing up in a house with her older brother and her father, her mother died when she was four. The story concentrates on Alice's continued fear of being embarrassed and about how this seems to happen all too often.

Paulsen, Gary. (1996). Brian's Winter. ISBN: 0385317220
Your plane crashes in the vast Canadian forest, but only you survive. What would you do? In Gary Paulson's Brian's Winter, Brian is faced with the task of surviving the vast wilderness of Canada. There is no one near, no power, no lights. Just trees, animals, and water. Brian shows his strength and genius in this book. Easy reading. There were so many intense and action packed pages of Brian's adventure.

Perkins, Lynne, (1995). R. Home Lovely. Greenwillow Books. New York. ISBN: 0688136877
Young Tiffany and her mother moved to live in a trailer in a dense and rural area. When Tiffany's mom Janelle went to work, Tiffany would stay home alone and play with her Barbie's and watch Television. One afternoon, Tiffany notices some green things growing in her yard. She decides to replant them and begin a garden. She cared for the plants and they became "a companion to her soul." She would water them and watch them grow. They eventually developed into a plentiful garden of tomatoes, potatoes, and melon. Young Tiffany said her garden was the most beautiful thing she had ever seen. Young Tiffany and her mother moved to live in a trailer in a dense and rural area. When Tiffany's mom Janelle went to work, Tiffany would stay home alone and play with her Barbie's and watch Television. One afternoon, Tiffany notices some green things growing in her yard. She decides to replant them and begin a garden. She cared for the plants and they became "a companion to her soul." She would water them and watch them grow. They eventually developed into a plentiful garden of tomatoes, potatoes, and melon. Young Tiffany said her garden was the most beautiful thing she had ever seen.

Sachar, Louis. (2000). Holes. Yearling Books; ISBN: 0440414806
As further evidence of his family's bad fortune, Stanley Yelnats is mistakenly sent to a hellish

correctional camp in the Texas desert where he finds his first real friend, a treasure, and a new sense of himself.

Salisbury, Graham. (1999). Jungle Dogs. Bantam Books; ISBN: 044041573X
Sixth-grader "Boy" Regis may be afraid of the wild dogs that lurk along his paper route, but he's no sissy. How can he prove that to his brother, who uses his fists to settle scores? By facing one of his greatest fears on his *own* terms, Boy learns that courage comes in many different shapes. Tightly written, fast-paced, thought-provoking... this story will appeal to a broad range of readers but may be a special treat for the more reluctant. Boy's challenge to himself will resonate deeply, with boys especially.

Soto, Gary. (1990). Baseball in April and Other Stories. San Diego: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich. ISBN: 0-15-205720-X. 111 p. Grade 7-8.
Youth and age, love and friendship, success and failure are the themes of these eleven short stories focusing on the everyday adventures of Mexican-American young people growing up in Fresno, California. Glossary of Spanish words and phrases included.

(1994). Crazy Weekend. New York: Scholastic, Inc.,. ISBN: 0-590-47814-1. Funny and fast-paced story of Hector and Mando who find themselves pursued by two goofy thieves after their photograph of a robbery is published in the newspaper. Glossary of Spanish words and phrases included.

(1993). Local News. San Diego: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich. ISBN: 0-15-248117-6.
A collection of thirteen short stories about the everyday lives of Mexican-American youth in California's Central Valley. Glossary of Spanish words and phrases included.

(1992). Pacific Crossing. San Diego: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich. ISBN: 0-15-259187-7.
A fourteen-year-old Mexican-American boy spends a summer with a host family in Japan, encountering new experiences and making new friends. Glossary of Japanese words and phrases included.

(1992). The Skirt. Illustrated by Eric Velasquez. New York: Delacorte Press. ISBN: 0-385-30665-2.
When Miata leaves the special skirt that she planned to wear in a dance performance on the school bus, she needs all her wits to get it back without her parents finding out.

(1991). Taking Sides. San Diego: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich. ISBN: 0-15-284076-1.
Fourteen year old, Lincoln Mendoza, an aspiring basketball player, must come to terms with his divided loyalties when he moves from the Hispanic inner city to a white suburban neighborhood. Glossary of Spanish words and phrases included.

Spinelli, J. (1997). Wringer. HarperTrophy; ISBN: 0064405788
Newberry Medal winner Jerry Spinelli has written a powerful tale in the Newberry Honor Book "Wringer." It is the suspenseful tale of a nine-year-old boy who dreads the coming of his tenth birthday. The local rite of passage for ten-year old boys is to be a "wringer," or the one who wrings the neck of pigeons who are not killed in the town's annual Pigeon Day Shoot. Jerry Spinelli, well known for his wonderful award winning "Maniac Magee" has developed a tale that

is horrifying yet compelling. How badly does Palmer want to fit in with his new buddies, Beans, Mutto, and Henry? The story appeals to readers from ages 9 on, who are grappling with their own issues of belonging to a group and standing up for one's own beliefs. There is some violence in the story line and theme, but the moral issues it addresses are handled with sensitivity and caring that far outweigh any negatives. I highly recommend it for parents and teachers to share with their children. It will keep them interested and reading until the end.

Wallace, Rich. (1997). Wrestling Sturbridge. Random House Childrens Pub; ISBN: 0679885552
Ben has to win the state wrestling championship... even if it means going against his best friend to do it. Ben has to get out of Sturbridge, PA. There is no way in hell he is willing to spend the rest of his life there. He needs a college scholarship. The pressure is on... if he doesn't win, he just might explode. Robert Cormier describes the nuances here much better than I can: "In a beautifully understated first novel, Rich Wallace brings the town and the teenager achingly alive as Ben wrestles not only his high school opponents but with the big issues of life and love and the choices a teenager must make." Reluctant readers, take note: you won't be able to stop turning the pages of this one!

Yolen, Jane and Bruce Coville. (1999). Armageddon Summer. Voyager Picture Book; ISBN: 0152022686
Marina and Jed accompany their parents' religious cult to await the end of the world atop a remote mountain, and try to decide what they themselves believe.

Zindel, Paul. (1983 reissue).The Pigman. Bantam Starfire; ISBN: 0553263218
A teenage boy and girl, high school sophomores from unhappy homes, tell of their bizarre relationship with an old man.

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October, 2000

Title of Book _____ Evaluated by _____	Author _____ Publisher _____			Publication Date _____
Criteria	Yes	No	Unsure	Comments
1. The content is presented honestly, avoiding sensationalizing and capitalizing on the novelty of a subject.				
2. The book exposes personal and social values central to our culture, while at the same time revealing how overt expression of those values may have changed.				
3. Readers are allowed to draw personal conclusions from the evidence. The author respects the readers' intelligence.				
4. The language and syntax reveal the background and the nature of characters and situations.				
5. A book honestly communicates that there is hope in this world.				
6. The book reflects sensitivity to the needs and rights of adolescents without preference, bias, or negative stereotypes.				
7. If violence and/or sexuality are included in a book, the subject is treated appropriately. • the author gives the necessary facts? • both sides of the conflict portrayed fully, fairly, and honestly? • writing is developed with feeling and emotion? • author helps the reader develop a perspective about the subject?				
8. The book provides readers with insights into their own problems and relationships.				
9. The book shows motivations, illuminates problems and show consequences?				
10. The book represents the experience of the culture depicted and has universal implications?				
11. The book is enjoyable.				
12. Reading level is appropriate for our students.				
13. What age levels will this book interest?	_____ Age range			

Sources:
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